

Record crowds visit HCA's OC Fair booth

Attendance set new records at this year's Orange County Fair and that produced lots of curious visitors to the Health Care Agency's booth, which followed the Fair's "Twist and Shout" theme.

The HCA booth, featuring a nostalgic beach scene, also caught the attention of the Fair's Judges, who awarded HCA four ribbons for the display. HCA took second place in the Best of Show competition, with additional second place honors for Theme and Staff categories. A third place ribbon for Interactivity and Variety rounded out this year's recognition.

HCA's booth featured something for all ages, with children captivated by the chance to "Hula Hoop For Health," adults taking their turn at the HCA "Jeopardy" game board and an old-fashioned game of Tic-Tac-Toe for kids of all ages. The friendly faces of HCA staffers attracted many guests to the booth, presenting an opportunity to answer questions and provide information about HCA programs and services.

Thanks go out to all of the HCA employees who staffed the booth during the Fair's 17-day run, contributing to another successful year at the Orange County Fair.

Children and adults were captivated by the "Hula Hoop For Health" competition at HCA's Orange County Fair booth.



HCA greets new PH and EMS managers

The arrival of summer has also brought the arrival of new leadership for several HCA programs and services.

The new Chief of Public Health Operations is Steve



Thronson, who joined HCA after serving most recently as Vice President, Director of Adolescent Operations for Phoenix Houses of California. Steve started his new role with HCA on July 9th bringing extensive healthcare experience to an evolving position new to Public Health.

HCA's focus on increasing access to healthcare services and efforts in the areas of disease control and prevention helped to attract Steve to the new post. He formerly

served in administrative positions with Kaiser Permanente, Cigna Healthcare and Marriott Healthcare Services and is looking forward to the challenges of his new job, including providing

support to Public Health's Division Managers and strengthening community relationships. Steve received his MBA from Pepperdine University after earning Bachelor's Degrees in economics and psychology.

HCA Emergency Medical Services has welcomed Darlene Isbell, RN, as the new EMS Program Manager.

Darlene has spent the past 21 years with the County of Los Angeles Emergency Medical Services, with the past eight years in the capacity of Assistant Director. During her tenure with Los Angeles County, she also served in numerous administrative positions and spent five years teaching at the county's Paramedic Training Institute.

After receiving her Bachelor's Degree in Nursing from Cal State Fullerton, she earned a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Cal State Long Beach. Darlene started her post with EMS on Friday, July 13.



Facts about the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Effective February 5, 1994, County employees became covered by FMLA. This act provides a benefit for allowing employees to respond to personal and immediate family "serious health conditions" and other "qualifying events" without jeopardizing their continued employment.

FMLA entitles an employee to twelve (12) weeks (480 hours) of leave (including paid or unpaid absences) each calendar year providing they meet the "eligibility requirements" and they or an immediate family member are experiencing a "serious health condition."

What Are the Eligibility Requirements?

- The employee has worked for the County for 12 months (any 12 months, non-consecutive months qualifies).
- The employee has actually worked 1250 hours during the 12 months immediately preceding the leave (sick leave, vacation and comp time are not considered work hours).

Who Is Considered an Immediate Family Member?

- The employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent.

What Is A FMLA Qualifying Serious Health Condition?

A serious health condition includes an illness, injury, impairment or physical or mental condition that involves:

- An illness or injury requiring inpatient care.
- Period of incapacity (inability to work or perform other regular daily activities) of more than three (3) calendar days that may or may not require subsequent continuing treatment by a health care provider.
- Any period of incapacity or treatment of a serious chronic health condition. A chronic serious health condition can be episodic in nature.
- Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy or for prenatal care.

Other FMLA Qualifying Events?

- Birth of a child.
- To care for the newborn child (within 12 months after birth).
- For placement of a child for adoption or foster care (up to 12 months after placement or adoption).

Can My Supervisor Ask Me for Verification of My Need for FMLA?

Yes, your supervisor can request

that you provide him/her with written verification from your health care provider, or the health care provider of your immediate family member, to support your requested need for FMLA. A diagnosis of your medical condition is not permitted under FMLA. However, your health care provider would need to support your need for leave by indicating the serious nature of your condition in order for your supervisor to determine that your request was valid and qualified for FMLA.

How Can the 12 Weeks/480 Hours Be Taken?

- In blocks of time off such as multiple days, weeks, or months.
- In increments of time off such as intermittently or sporadically.
- On a reduced schedule or partial day basis.

Are My Leave Balances Used When I Need a FMLA?

Yes, your balances are used to pay you for the time you are on FMLA. However, if you exhaust your balances before returning from a FMLA, the County will continue to pay your employee portion of

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Coming Soon!

Very soon, HCA employees will be asked to provide some very important information on the training they have participated in and the types of training they would like to see offered in the future.

The training survey will be distributed to all HCA staffers and everyone's participation is encouraged. The information provided by this survey will be used to help shape the Agency's future training efforts as well as help identify the types of training that have already proven most beneficial to HCA staff in the performance of their jobs.

The survey will be distributed on an upcoming payday Friday, so please take a few minutes from your busy schedule to complete and return the survey. Your participation in the training survey will give us a more complete picture of your training needs as HCA seeks to better meet your needs, the needs of its clients and the community.

Attention-Graduates of Long Beach City College Nursing or Allied Health Programs!

Help celebrate LBCC's 40th anniversary on Sunday, September 30. For more information, contact Peggy Wells at (562) 938-4182 or by e-mail at pwells@lbcc.cc.ca.us



Staff from many HCA programs and services joined with Environmental Health Services employees to celebrate the selection of Steven Wong as Director of Environmental Health at a reception held July 11th. Pictured at the event are (l-r): Denise Fennessy, Dory Malloy and Patricia Gentry of Environmental Health; Deputy Agency Director Mike Spurgeon; Steven Wong; HCA Director Julie Poulson; and Bill Ford of Environmental Health.

HIPAA forum slated

A cooperative effort of the Health Care Agency and other local healthcare organizations will bring much needed information about the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) to local providers.

Through a HIPAA forum scheduled for Thursday, August 23rd in the Board Hearing Room at the Hall of Administration, health care providers will get HIPAA facts from a representative of MargaretVA Consulting, a nationally recognized expert on HIPAA. HCA is teaming up with the Orange County Medical Association, Health Care Association of Southern California and the Coalition of Orange County Community Clinics to host the event.

HIPAA is bringing sweeping changes to the healthcare industry through regulations that require:

- Standardization of electronic patient health, administrative and financial data
- Unique health identifiers for individuals, employers, health plans and health care providers
- Security standards protecting the confidentiality and integrity of "individually identifiable health information," past, present or future

All healthcare organizations are affected by the requirements of HIPAA, including physician offices, health plans, employers, public health authorities, life insurers, clearinghouses, billing agencies, information systems vendors, service organizations, and universities. HIPAA has been called bigger than 'Y2K' in terms of its impact on the health care industry.

FMLA

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your medical premium. (You would still have to pay for the dependent coverage portion of your medical benefits, if any.)

Does FMLA Take the Place of Other State or Federal Laws or the County Memoranda of Understandings?

No, other laws such as the American with Disabilities Act, California Pregnancy Disability Act, California Family Rights Act, and the County's Memoranda of Understanding relating to leaves of absence remain in full force.

Who Do I Call If I Need More Information or Have Specific Questions?

Your immediate supervisor is an excellent source of information. HCA Human Resources will be happy to assist you as well.

Compliance hotline now in service

A major component of the HCA Compliance Program is making its debut with the announcement of a toll-free confidential telephone hotline service. The hotline will be available 24-hours a day, seven days a week, through a service provided by an outside company that specializes in healthcare related compliance issues. The toll-free number is 1-866-260-5636 and the line is staffed by specially trained operators who will take down the information you provide and, if you wish, assign your call a private code that can be used for any follow-up communications to address your concerns.



Any HCA employee who sees or experiences misconduct, or who needs guidance on a compliance related issue, is encouraged to first communicate the issues to their supervisor or manager. These matters can also be reported to another supervisor or manager within your chain-of-command, to HCA Human Resources or directly to the HCA Office of Compliance. However, the hotline service is available for those who may be uncomfortable discussing the issue with a manager or supervisor or for those who believe an issue has not been handled appropriately.

HCA Chief Compliance Officer David Riley says the hotline provides a confidential and anonymous method of reporting concerns. "If an employee has a legal or ethical concern, even though they may not be sure there is a problem, we would encourage them to report it to someone within the Agency or to the hotline," Riley said.

Examples of compliance concerns include:

- Any local, federal or state laws
- Billing regulations
- Conflict of interest policies
- Copyright and software privacy laws
- Government contract requirements
- Health, safety and environmental laws
- Internal accounting controls
- Patient rights or patient care policies
- Policies prohibiting disclosure of confidential information

More information on the hotline and about the Compliance Program in general is available on the HCA Intranet.

HCA to the rescue

Recent calls for blood donations to overcome a growing nationwide shortage have been heeded by HCA employees, who turned out to roll up their sleeves at three blood drives in July.

According to one of the HCA blood drive coordinators, Sylvia Valles, over 90 donors came forward for the two drives held at 405 W. 5th Street in Santa Ana, and over 80 people were signed up for the July 24th blood drive at the Hall of Administration. Once again, HCA employees showed they truly care about others and are willing to give of their time to help save lives.

While the next Agency blood drives are still a few months off, those who were not able to give in July are encouraged to contact their local Red Cross chapter or another blood bank to schedule a donation. Blood donation takes just an hour of your time but can mean a lifetime for a patient in a local hospital. If you'd like more information about becoming a blood donor, check out the Red Cross website at www.redcross.org.



HCA's Sylvia Valles completes her blood donation.

September is "Recovery Happens" Month

"Recover Happens" is a state-wide collaboration between private citizens, organizations, counties and the State Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, working together to promote the many successes of prevention, treatment and recovery programs. Now in its seventh year, "Recovery Happens" has been instrumental in enhancing the public's knowledge of the problem of alcohol and drug abuse in California. The theme of this year's "Recovery Happens" month is *We Recover Together—Family, Friends and Community; Proposition 36—Another Step Forward*.

Within the County, many of us may have our own personal experience with the debilitating disease of addiction. Some have family members or friends with some type of substance abuse problem, whether it is a relative struggling with alcoholism or a friend abusing prescription medication. As a community we suffer when one of our loved ones is affected. The stigma of having a substance abuse problem often affects a person's desire to enter into treatment. The old adage that "once an addict always an addict" has proven to be untrue. People do recover. There are various approaches to recovery, including residential treatment, outpatient counseling, self-help programs, and faith based programs. Many individuals are first introduced to recovery through court-mandated programs, such as Proposition 36.

Proposition 36, the Substance Abuse Crime Prevention Act of 2000 (SACPA), went into effect July 1, 2001 and refers qualified candidates to treatment instead of jail for drug possession charges. HCA Behavioral Health's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services (ADAS)

coordinates services in this collaborative program with O.C. Probation, the Public Defender, District Attorney, and the Courts.

ADAS offers a multitude of culturally appropriate programs to help with every facet of addiction. The range of services available includes substance abuse prevention, street outreach, detoxification, outpatient counseling, narcotic replacement (methadone) and residential care. These services are either provided by the County or are contracted with private community-based organizations, to effectively address the treatment needs of substance abusers. There are programs designed to meet the special needs of specific populations such as women with children, adolescents, persons living with HIV, clients with dual diagnoses, criminal justice and language specific programs. ADAS, through its many services, provided treatment opportunities to over 10,000 clients last year.

For each dollar spent in treatment, we save seven dollars in other health and public safety costs. Treatment and recovery programs help to reduce unnecessary health care costs, welfare, the number of people in jails and prisons, street and gang violence, school dropout rates, the cost of crime, the rate of recidivism, burden on law enforcement officials and the costs of lost productivity in the workplace. Treatment improves the quality of life for individuals, families and the society in which we live. Recovery is an ongoing process and without the support of family, friends and the community, staying drug free would be very difficult. Recovery happens with your support.

If you would like more information on alcohol and drug resources in Orange County, contact ADAS at (714) 834-3885.

Mural wins art competition



Teens involved in HCA programs at the Youth and Family Resource Center in Santa Ana have taken top honors in the Cesar Chavez Beautification and Mural Art Contest, sponsored by Orange County On Track. This beautiful mural, located at Magnolia High School in Anaheim, was dedicated July 16th with a fiesta featuring food and mariachi music. The dedication program included speeches by Board of Supervisors Chair Cynthia P. Coad and other local dignitaries. This special community project was funded by the Office of the Attorney General of the State of California and AmeriCorps. Our congratulations to the YFRC participants and the staff of Children and Youth Services who supervise them!

we're on-line!

You can check out the latest issues of the Health Care Agency's newsletters by using this URL:

<http://www.oc.ca.gov/hca/newslett.htm>

We will keep current issues on line for a year. Let us know how you like the convenience!

September Health Observances

Baby Safety Month

Cold & Flu Campaign

Drug & Alcohol Addiction Recovery Month

Healthy Aging Month

Food Safety Education Month

National Cholesterol Education Month

Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month

National 5-A-Day Week September 10-16

Latino Behavioral Health Week September 15-22

Prostate Cancer Awareness Week September 16-22

National Rehabilitation Week September 16-22

Pollution Prevention Week September 17-23

WHAT'S UP

What's UP is a newsletter for employees of the County of Orange, CA, Health Care Agency.

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Your Input

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